

# THE MYSTERIES OF MARS

Late in 1992, NASA sent a new satellite to Mars that hopefully, during the process of its mapping, will resolve the riddle of the so-called Face on Mars.

In this article, Brian Crowley, co-author of *The Face on Mars* and *Return to Mars*, examines the evidence that suggests there may once have been intelligent life on Mars.

The NASA Mars Observer was launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force base in Florida in late 1992, on a 337-day voyage to Mars. The Mars Observer initially is expected to arrive at Mars by 19 August 1993, and enter a long, elliptical orbit over the poles. By mid-December 1993 it should be ready to begin its two-year mapping of the surface of Mars. Unlike Viking, the Mars Observer will focus not on biology but on geology and climate. Thanks to the efforts of researchers like Richard Hoagland, the Mars Observer will remap certain areas where there are alleged artefacts.

Various unmanned missions to Mars in the 1960s and 1970s cleared away all notions that Mars is capable of sustaining life as we know it. The most important of these expeditions was undoubtedly the NASA Viking Mission of 1976. Controlled by NASA engineers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory back on Earth, two identical Viking spacecraft were launched on a ten-month journey through 440 million miles of space to finally orbit around the red planet. Each of the Vikings was an automated self-powered laboratory capable of splitting up into an orbiter circling the planet, and a lander that could soft-land on the alien world. While the orbiters were able to explore and comprehensively photograph Mars from the sky, the landers conducted soil and other experiments in preselected areas. As the latter experiments were admitted by NASA scientists to be designed to prove the absence of life in any form on Mars, their results may be discounted as being negatively biased from the start and thus probably worthless. Ironically, the first picture taken by a Viking lander was of the vehicle's own footpad!

## PICTURES OF MARS

More than 50,000 pictures were, however, taken of the surface of the planet by the Viking orbiters. Now, some 17 years later, many have still to be viewed, let alone analysed. Some may never see the light of day due to time and staffing cost constraints.

With its polar ice caps and other features, Mars remains more Earthlike than any of the other planets in our solar system. However, at first glance, it is a freezingly cold, barren, crater-strewn and windswept world, just over half the size of Earth, some 4,230 miles in diameter—Earth is 7,926 miles. Its days are 24 hours 37 minutes long. Like Earth, Mars has seasonal changes. Clouds come and go and morning fog covers the floors of some major craters, but the atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide. Fierce dust storms rage, fanned by 300 miles-per-hour winds. The temperature starts at way below freezing, and seldom goes above it—although the polar ice caps are seen to advance and retreat seasonally.

Some of the more breathtaking images of the surface of Mars include views of such imposing features as the Valles Marineris, the so-called Grand Canyon of Mars, the largest natural feature in our solar system, 250 miles across on average, and stretching from end to end some 3,100 miles, the distance from San Francisco to New York. Although Mars is now a dry, hot and dusty hell-hole of a planet, there is indisputable evidence of vast previous water flow that cut immense canyons, flowed around island features, and left still visible shorelines. Possibly the most striking of all the singular natural formations on Mars

is the magnificent volcano Olympus Mons, which is about 75-100 times greater than the biggest volcano on Earth—Mauna Loa in Hawaii—and the largest mountain yet observed in our solar system. There are also great ice cliffs in the north polar region at the edge of the polar ice cap, which consists of water ice and not frozen carbon dioxide. Any conventional tour of Mars would take one through these mentioned wonders and more, and probably end with a view of the spectacular Martian sunset.

And, if that was all there was to see of the Viking images of Mars, it would still indicate a most remarkable achievement in human scientific and engineering endeavour. But the official story is not the full story!

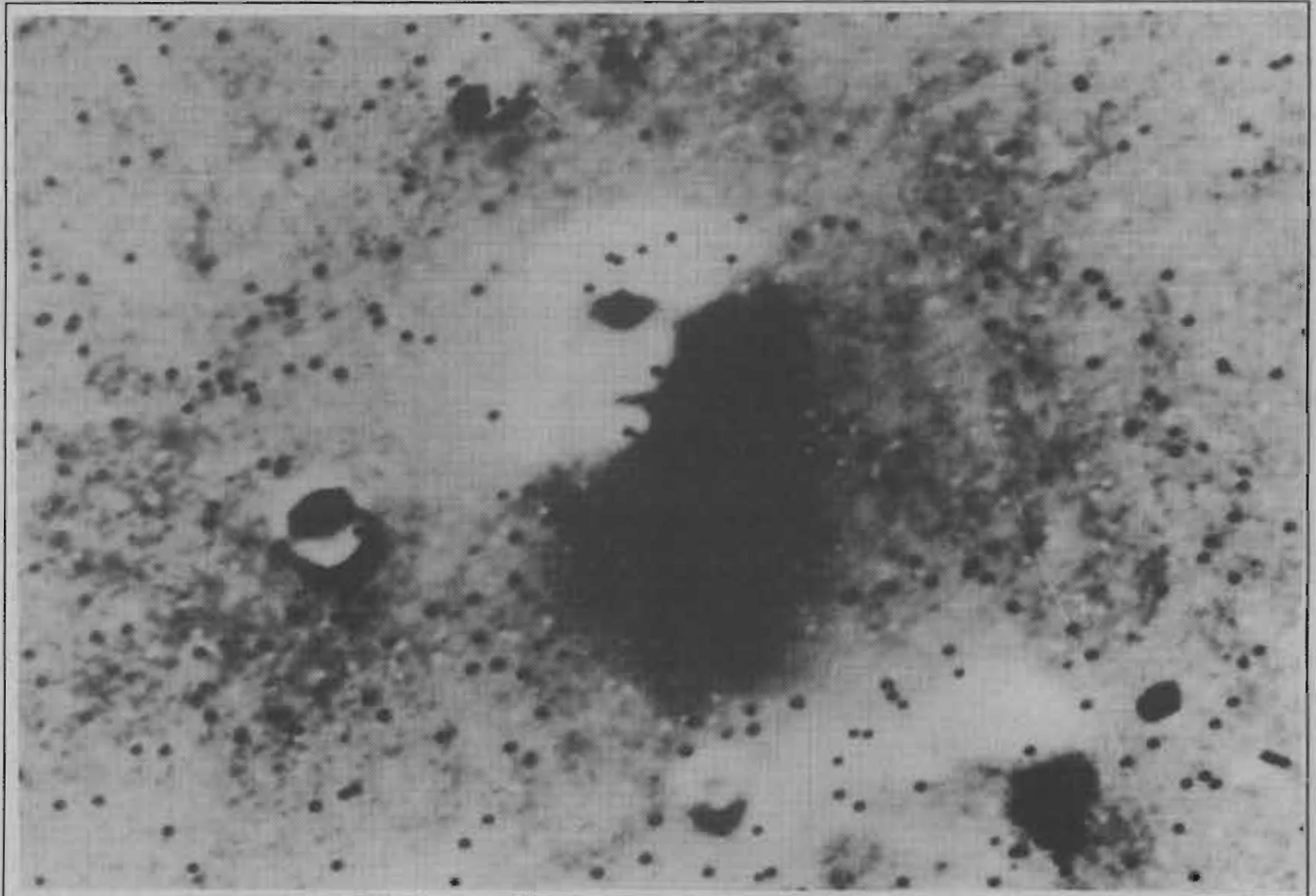
### THE FACE ON MARS

Several private investigators, some with former NASA connections, have down the years provided the most compelling evidence that suggests either a former civilisation or some sort of way station activity that has left a legacy of intriguing monument-type features scattered on the enigmatic planet. Prior to 1976, the year of the Viking Mission, Dr James J. Hurtak of the Academy for Future Science, California, published a series of articles highlighting NASA photographs from the previous Mariner 9 expedition of 1971 that showed distinct pyramid-shaped 'mountains' in the Elysium quadrangle region that defied rational explanation as natural formations. Almost prophetically, Hurtak even postulated that if there were pyramids on Mars, somewhere we may even find a Sphinx! Then came Viking, and thousands more pictures; and the first published work to centre

on the enigmatic 'Face on Mars', a massive face-like object (imagine Ayers Rock with a face carved on it), was by an obscure Vienna-based Austrian computer scientist, Walter Hain, whose 1979 book in the German language has recently been published in English under the title *We, From Mars* (available from the author c/- Mars Findings, PO Box 1218, Vienna 1070, Austria). Hain's conclusions, like those of Hurtak, were for the most part ignored by establishment scientists who, it seems, simply did not want to believe the possibility of former life on Mars.

The first comprehensive scientific appraisal of the unusual Mars surface features was done by two former NASA contractors, computer scientists Vincent DiPietro and Gregory Molenaar, whose monograph entitled *Unusual Mars Surface Features* was first published in 1982 (now running into several editions and available from Mars Research, PO Box 284, Glenn Dale, Maryland, USA). DiPietro and Molenaar, initially intrigued by the already-known image of the Mars face, developed their unique Starburst Pixel Interleaving Technique (SPIT) to enhance NASA pictures that showed strange features. With new additions to their investigative team in the forms of plasma physicist Dr John Brandenburg and Dr Mark J. Carlotto of The Analytic Science Corporation, their more recent research has thrown up the possibility of at least one other face-like monument staring out into space from the dusty plains of Mars.

In 1986, with still no official recognition that there was any sort of Mars mystery to be cleared up, Macmillan Australia published the first book-length examination of the subject in the English language, written by the already mentioned J. J. Hurtak and the writer of this article (*The Face on Mars: Evidence of a*



Enlargement of NASA Viking frame 35A72, showing the Face feature. Estimated dimensions of the 'Face of Cydonia' are: 2.5km long, 2 km wide, and between 500 and 800m high.

*Lost Martian Civilisation*), who consulted directly with DiPietro and Molenaar and received their permission to use SPIT-enhanced illustrations. There followed several US-published works, including the outstanding *The Monuments of Mars* by Richard Hoagland of the Mars Investigation Group, who has done more than anyone to publicise the Mars findings, including a recent compelling video presentation to a large group of NASA scientists.

Briefly described, the originally discovered Mars Face feature, with its peculiar Egyptian-style headdress, is a huge mountain-like object in the Cydonia region approximately 1.6 miles (2.5 km) from crown to chin, 1.2 miles (2 km) wide and, judging by the shadow length in one of the frames, between about 1,650 feet (500 metres) and 2,600 feet (800 metres) high. Colour enhancement techniques used by the DiPietro/Molenaar team have indicated an eyeball feature in the visible eye socket, while recent enhancements by Carlotto clearly show the presence of sculptured teeth in the mouth area. What goes firmly against any argument that the Face on Mars may be merely a rock formation sculptured to look human-like through water and/or wind erosion is that fact that it represents a full face form, with symmetrically placed features. Any study of simulacra (faces and figures in nature) as related to mountains, hills and rocks on our own planet, reveals that such instances of natural face-like rock sculpture almost invariably present their human facial image in profile.

The initial Face on Mars photographs elicited a wide range of responses relating to the nature of the image, the first being, naturally, a comparison with the Egyptian Sphinx/pyramid configuration at Giza. Hoagland equates the resultant image with the Egyptian god Horus, whose hieroglyph can be translated as 'face'. One of the titles of Horus was 'Lord of the Horizon' and any sighting of the Cydonia object from a viewable distance on the surface of the planet might easily see this description translated into sculptured reality. Another commentator sees the image of the Hindu monkey god Hanuman in the face, while the Zulu author and 'keeper of the tales', Credo Vuzamazulu Mutwa, who sees the features as distinctly negroid, has insisted to the writer that he considers the Face on Mars a vindication of the old African legends that claim that the Bantu people originally came from the red planet (there are, indeed, both African and Celtic

legends that claim descent of certain Earth races from pregnant women who escaped some great holocaust on Mars many tens of thousands of years ago).

The writer's own first and lasting impression of the Cydonia Face is that it might be some kind of warning beacon for space travellers entering our solar system, that great care should be taken next planet in, where that very destructive creature, man, resides.

#### PYRAMIDS AND INCA CITIES?

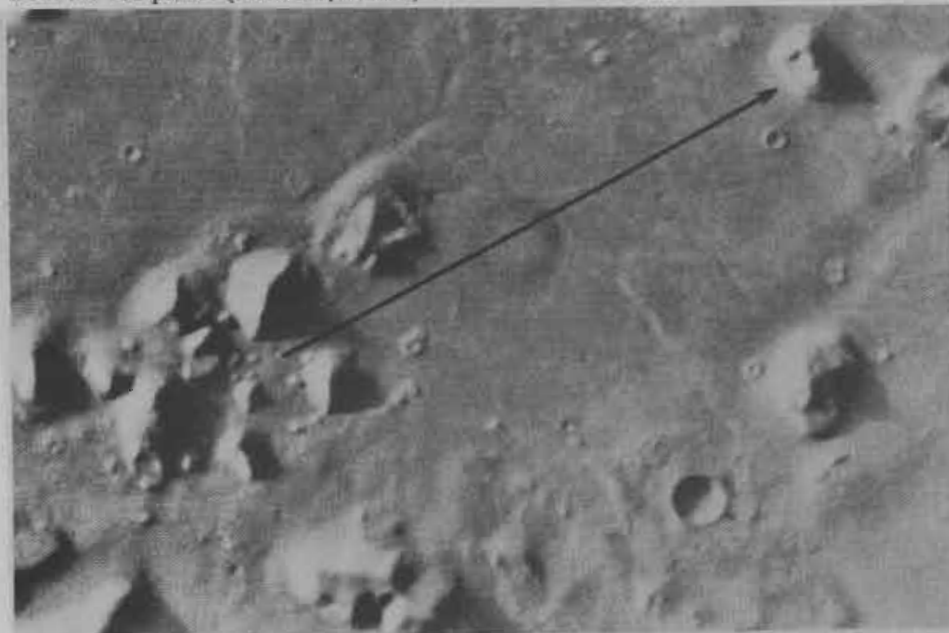
In attendance, about 7 miles (11 km) south-west of the Cydonia Face, is a cluster of angled constructions of various sizes suggesting pyramids, one of which appears to be either still under construction (when abandoned?) or partially destroyed. But the Face of Cydonia and its attendant pyramids are not the only out-of-place objects scattered on the dusty plains of Mars. A Mariner 9 picture features a strange series of cubical and rectangular cells ranging from three to five miles in length and forming a pattern which has its closest comparison in early Inca mountain city remains found in northern Peru and Bolivia, as photographed from the sky. Geologists remain baffled by this unusual box-like patterning.

The Mariner 9 frames of the Elysium quadrangle mentioned previously, highlights several sets of tetrahedron pyramidal structures which are far too unique to be immediately written off as natural formations. Some of these 'artefacts' are enormous—ten times the height and a thousand times the volume of the Great Pyramid of Giza. Image enhancement reveals some of these massive Martian pyramids reaching more than half a mile into the sky.

Another Mars pyramid teeters miraculously on the lip of a huge crater. There is no known explanation for how it might have got there. Other strange anomalies include what looks for all the world like a giant airport (or spaceport) with a central hub and wheel-like extensions, just like a modern airport, and giant wormhole-type features that seem to come straight out of the novel *Dune*. These are linear effects that lead right up to the crater lip pyramid. There are also pockets of what could be underground tunnels—perhaps an underground network that collapsed due to crater impact.

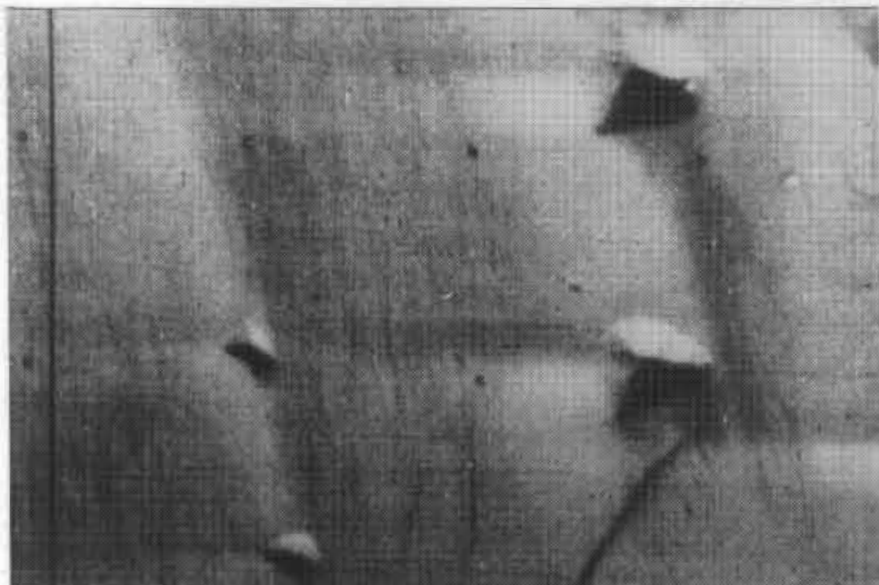
#### THE SECOND FACE

Of the newly uncovered wonders of Mars unveiled by the ongoing DiPietro/Molenaar research perhaps the most astounding (and damning for the scoffers) is evidence for at least one, and possibly two more Faces that demand closer scrutiny. The most convincing of these finds in a region of Mars known as Utopia, exhibits most of the features of the Cydonia Face, including twin eye cavities and an Egyptian-style headdress (or is it a space helmet?). It also shows two peculiar features that also, on close examination, appear to mark the Cydonia Face, i.e., notches on the cheeks and an indentation above the right eye. However, unlike its apparently well-preserved Cydonia counterpart, the Utopia face appears as if it may have been damaged at some stage (although clearer resolution may dis-



View of the 'Face' from the 'City Square'. Photo courtesy of Dr Mark J. Carlotto.





Mars 'Pyramids' in the Elysium quadrangle. Photo by NASA.

prove this)—much like our poor old Sphinx back on Earth, which had its nose shot off by a trigger-happy French soldier when Napoleon invaded the Land of the Nile.

Sceptics among the scientific community remain unconvinced that either of the two mentioned Faces on Mars could be genuine artefacts. Any reasonable, thinking person might be happy to concede that a single Face may be an aberration of nature, but two Faces with similar features...

Hopefully, the current NASA mission to Mars will give us hard evidence either way.

The DiPietro/Molenaar et al. ongoing effect, incidentally, indicates the possibility of even a third Face on Mars, although the photographic evidence for this is not anywhere near as convincing as that for Face One and Face Two.

#### PHOBOS AND ANOTHER MYSTERY

Phobos, one of two moons of Mars, has itself always been considered a rather mysterious object, as has its smaller twin, Deimos. Iosef Shklovskii, noted member of the Soviet Academy of Science and co-writer with Dr Carl Sagan of *Intelligent Life in the Universe*, once calculated from the estimated density of the Martian atmosphere and the peculiar 'acceleration' of Phobos, that the satellite must be hollow. A space station of huge proportions?

In July 1988, the Russians launched two probes in the direction of Mars, Phobos 1 and Phobos 2, with the primary intention of investigating the planet's mysterious moon. Phobos 1 was unfortunately lost en route; Phobos 2 was also ultimately lost in most intriguing circumstances, but not before it had beamed back certain images and information from the planet Mars itself.

According to Boris Bolitsky, science correspondent for Radio Moscow, just before contact was lost with Phobos 2, several unusual images were radioed back to Earth, described by the Russian as "quite remarkable features". A report taken from *New Scientist* of 8 April 1989, describes the following: "The features are either on the Martian surface or in the lower atmosphere. The features are between 20 and 25 kilometres wide and do not resemble any known geological formation. They are spindle-shaped and are proving to be intriguing and puzzling."

For the record, no further report on these "intriguing and puz-

zling" features has appeared in *New Scientist*.

The penultimate frame taken by Phobos 2 has been released and fits the description given above. It exhibits a convex catseye shadow which, because the overhead solar inclination prevented shadow-casting by Martian surface features, implies a shadow thrown on the surface by something in orbit—beyond the orbit of Phobos 2 itself. The shadow—spindle- or cigar-shaped—is inconsistent with any possible shadow cast by the moon Phobos, which is an irregular potato shape. One needs little imagination to postulate a giant, hovering cigar-shaped mother craft similar to those documented down the years by UFO investigators.

Another Phobos picture, released on Canadian TV, presents an infrared scan radiometer image of the Martian surface that showed clearly defined rectangular areas. These were interconnected with a latticework of perfectly straight channels, much resembling a city block. There were no correspond-

ing surface features taken by regular cameras. This suggests the heat signature of what may be a set of underground caverns and channels that are just too geometrically regular to be formed naturally. According to Dr John Becklake of the London Science Museum, "The city-like pattern is 60 kilometres wide and could easily be mistaken for an aerial view of Los Angeles."

An underground base? If not, why the heat signals?

The final picture taken by Phobos 2 before it was struck by what has been officially described as "a small piece of rock which happened to be in the same orbit" has never been publicly released, to the knowledge of this writer. One report indicated that it contained "potentially sensitive information" and would be presented at a closed meeting with US and British officials.

Life on our own planet is diverse in the extreme. Why should we therefore place limits on extraterrestrial possibilities? Being open-minded doesn't necessarily mean allowing all sorts of notions to come flooding into the mind. But people once claimed the world to be flat, that men could not fly, that metal would not float, and that outer space was beyond humankind's reach. For myself, I cannot look at the night sky without wondering about the myriad possibilities for life out there...and why not also within our own solar system? ∞



The author, Brian Crowley (left), and James J. Hurtak.